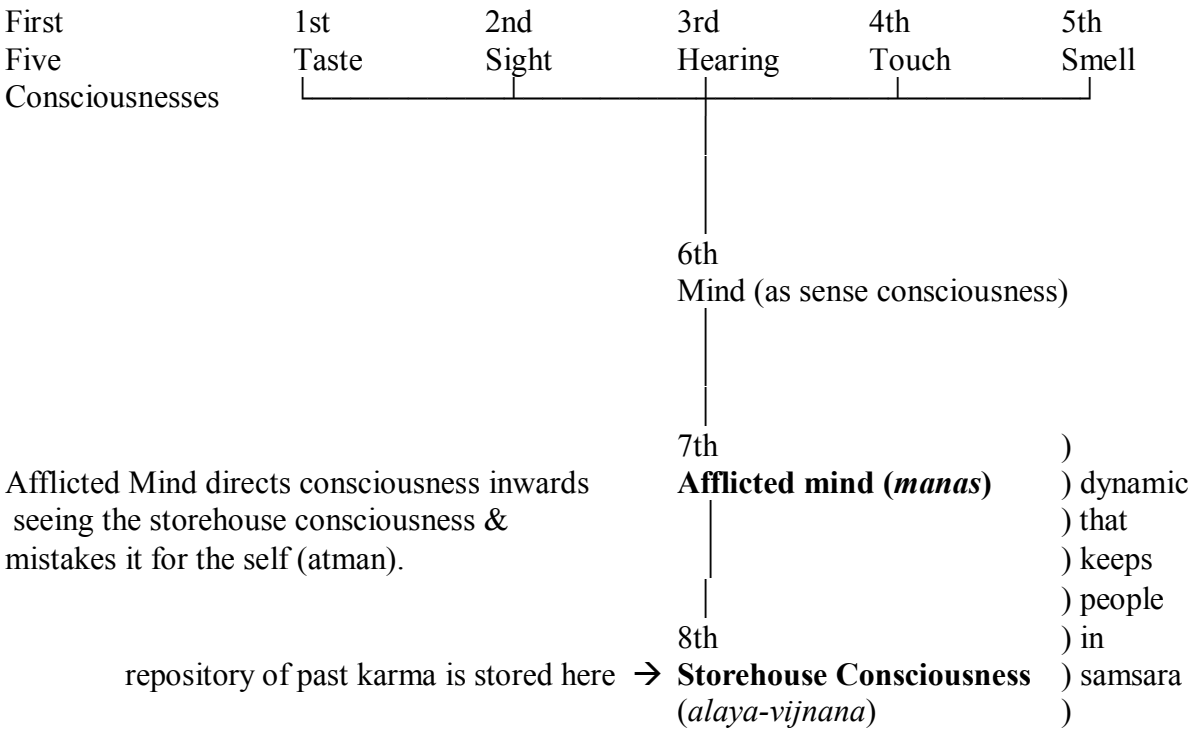
The Eight Consciousnesses in Yogācāra (Faxiang/Fa-Hsiang 法相) Thought



Analogy: When one smokes, the seed that is perfumed by the habit of smoking kicks in to stimulate the craving for smoking. At the same time, new seeds are being created, perfumed with smoking, and stored in the storehouse consciousness (i.e., seeds and perfuming work in tandem, as both cause and effect). To summarize:

1. seeds produce external realities (e.g., greed, cravings, etc.)
2. seeds are perfumed by external realities
3. seeds produce more seeds

Yogacara does not deny external objects, only that they are not important (= we think that there is a subject-object dichotomy, when in reality, everything is in the mind). See analogy below:

Analogy: A man enters into a darkened room and sees what he thoughts to be a snake and jumps back in fright. Upon turning on the light, he realizes that it is only a rope.
external object = rope (remains unchanged/1st)
mind = imagined a snake (=imagined nature of experience), but realizes that it is only a rope (=perfected nature of experience/3rd)

NB: 2nd nature of interdependent experience is associated with the Madhyamika School and Yogacara thingers perceived this as inferior to their own position (=perfected nature of experience).